# Little Saint Hilary

and other stories

By Barbara Yechton

Louise Wilcox

from

Roger

Christmas 1895

# LITTLE SAINT HILARY

## AND OTHER STORIES

## GOLDEN-ROD STORIES

**By Barbara Yechton.**

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**THOMAS WHITTAKER,**

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"St. Hilary would weave stories which Humphrey thought beautiful."

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# LITTLE SAINT HILARY

## AND OTHER STORIES

BY

BARBARA YECHTON

AUTHOR OF "CHRISTINE'S INSPIRATION," "INGLESIDE," "'GENTLE-HEART' STORIES," ETC.

*ILLUSTRATED BY MINNA BROWN*

SECOND THOUSAND

*"Stronger than steel*
*Is the Sword of the Spirit;*
*Swifter than arrows*
*The life of the truth is,*
*Greater than anger*
*Is love, and subdueth."*—LONGFELLOW

NEW YORK

THOMAS WHITTAKER

2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE

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THOMAS WHITTAKER.

Affectionately Dedicated to my Friend

MRS. CHARLES S. HOMER

FOR OLD ACQUAINTANCE SAKE

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# SAINT LITTLE HILARY.

PERHAPS you think this a queer name for a little boy? You will think it still queerer when I tell you that he was christened Hugh Marmaduke Lascelles Dunscombe, though only his mamma called him Hugh. He lived in England, and as his father was an earl and this little boy was his eldest son, his title was viscount St. Hilary; so his family and little friends called him St. Hilary.

He was a slender, delicate boy, with a pale face, expressive dark blue eyes, and long yellow curls, which papa constantly threatened to cut off. He was quiet of manner, and some people thought him cold of disposition, but these people did not know him at all, for he passionately loved his big, handsome father, his delicate, fair mother,

his baby sister, and best of all his beautiful brother and constant playmate, Humphrey.

Humphrey was fully as tall as St. Hilary, though a little more than a year younger. He was strong and well formed, carrying his head like a little prince. His eyes were large, changing from dark brown to light yellow. He, too, had long curls, but of a ruddy color that actually glittered in the sunlight. He could run and jump and ride in a fashion that won admiration from St. Hilary, for very little exertion tired him, and sometimes he would say wistfully, "Oh! Humph, how splendid it must be to run and jump and play as you do, and never get tired. I wish I could do it instead of being such a molly-coddle."

Then Humphrey would give him a bear's hug, rubbing his rosy cheek against his brother's pale one, with—"And I wish I could learn my lessons as easily as you do yours, and be able to make up such beautiful stories as you can. Anybody can ride and jump. You know yourself papa called me a dunce the other day, though you felt worse about it than I did."

The boys were inseparable, and when Humphrey in the excess of high spirits and good health got St. Hilary into scrapes, the latter bore punishment with Spartan-like fortitude rather than tell on him, while Humphrey would sooner be punished twice over than see his brother suffer. Their interests were so closely interwoven, and the home life so guarded, that Humphrey up to this time had not realized that St. Hilary was any better off or in any way of more importance in the world than himself; in fact, his love for his brother was unconsciously largely tinged with pity for the physical weakness that debarred him from many enjoyments, and envy or jealousy of his delicate elder brother would have seemed impossible. He was very willful and quick-tempered, giving way when angry to such outbursts of rage as astonished everyone, grieving and frightening his mother, while his father looked very serious on such occasions. These fits of temper did not last long, and his penitence was always most sincere, but as his papa said, gravely, "The mischief was all done then."

Humphrey looked very like one of the pictures that hung in the eastern gallery,—a dark, handsome man with powdered hair and a rose in his gay satin coat. His likeness to it made the picture a favorite one with both little boys. The original of it had been a Rupert Everard Dunscombe, this much they knew, but neither father nor mother said much about him, while nurse spoke very crossly when they asked her. "There's plenty pictures in the gall'ry to look at without troubling your heads about that one," she said. The children's interest deepened more than ever, and when Humphrey could be induced to stay indoors they would sit on the deep window seat under the large stained-glass window, within good sight of Rupert's picture, and with the slender knowledge to go on that he had been a soldier, St. Hilary would weave stories which Humphrey thought beautiful.

The stained window was also a source of great pleasure to them. The colors were very rich; when the sun shone on it the coat-of-arms and the inscription below it were a vivid bit of color in the quiet gallery. St. Hilary had long ago

spelled out the motto and learned its meaning—*Qui patitur vincit*—"Who endures, conquers." His papa said it was a motto that the Dunscombes ought to keep well in memory, as they all had quick tempers, and a victory over one's temper was more of a victory than any other, and made one stronger when the next temptation came. He spoke very seriously, and Humphrey fancied he looked at him.

These remarks impressed the little fellow, and the next time he got angry Humphrey ran away into the grounds to try to conquer himself. Lying flat on the grass he kicked and rolled, with clinched hands, until the paroxysm of rage was over; rising to go home he was surprised to see St. Hilary sitting near under a tree, such a look of sympathy and love on his patient face that Humphrey ran to him, and throwing both arms about him, cried, "Saintie, you're the very best boy I ever heard of. Oh! I wish I were just like you. I'm so afraid I'll always be naughty, and then nobody will love me."

St. Hilary's kisses and warm assurances that

he would always love him were very comforting, and for some time after this Humphrey tried very hard to control his temper, succeeding so well that both his papa and mamma felt much encouraged about him.

One day, not long after this, the children were allowed to go to the kennels to see some new dogs which had just arrived. The hounds were very fine animals, and the boys greatly admired them, asking many questions. An old man sat on a stone bench near by, looking closely at the children; presently, when the keeper left them for a few minutes, he said to Humphrey—"Coom here, my little lord St. Hilary, it's a true Dunscombe ye be, straight as a lance and red as a rose. An' where did yon pale face coom fra'?"

The tone of voice made Humphrey color up. "He is St. Hilary," he answered, touching his brother, "and I am Humphrey."

"Maw's the pity," cried the old man, shaking his head. "An' ye the very image o' Black Rupert."

"Do you know about him?" eagerly cried both boys. "Oh! tell us."

The old man looked at them from under his grey eyebrows; he was flattered by their interest. "It's na' a pleasant story," he began. "In those days, St. Hilary an' Black Rupert were brothers. St. Hilary was lame and pale—na' more like a Dunscombe than yon weak boy—but Rupert was a rare ma' for good looks, only he had the Dunscombe temper, an' when he was crossed his rage was fearful. The estate was na' sae rich as it is noo, an' when they grew up all the money an' the titles went to St. Hilary. He was properlike an' had sma' patience wi' his younger brother, an' one day—nabody knows wha' for—they fell a-quar'lin' an' Rupert raised his han' agin his brother an' nigh killed him! He had to run awa' to furrin parts. Ye look like Rupert, an' ye're a second son. Beware lest ye an' this St. Hilary come to fightin'."

The horror expressed on both small, upraised faces reached even his blunted faculties, and he paused.

"You're a bad man," cried Humphrey, angrily, clinching his hands, "to think I could ever wish to kill my dear, dear brother, St. Hilary.

I love him better than anything else in the world."

St. Hilary stood pale and silent, a startled look in his eyes. Just then Wilson appeared. "What have you been saying to the young gentlemen, gaffer?" he asked, sharply, then to the boys—"Don't mind anything he says, young masters, he's very old and foolish and doesn't know what he is talking about."

The boys walked silently up to the house; when they got in the big hall St. Hilary suddenly put his arms around Humphrey and squeezed him tight. "We *couldn't* be like Black Rupert and his brother. We love each other too dearly. Try not to think of it again, Humph."

"I'm like him when I get angry," said Humphrey, with quivering lips. "No matter how hard I try, Saintie, it seems to take right hold of me, and I feel as if I could do dreadful things—" he broke away and ran upstairs.

After this St. Hilary loved his brother more than ever, if that were possible. He gave up to him in everything until his parents noticed it and his papa spoke to him about it. The boy's

answer startled him a great deal: "I don't mind doing it, papa, I love Humph so dearly. You see, he is so strong and handsome he ought to have been the heir instead of me, and I'm trying to make it up to him."

This view of the matter was an unexpected one, and the earl thought it best to speak very seriously to his eldest son. He tried to make him understand that God was the One who had made him the heir, as best suited to fill the position, and that the only injury he was doing his brother was by giving in too much to him and thus indulging his self-will. He said it would be best for both boys that St. Hilary's rights should be clearly understood between them. This made St. Hilary feel so badly, and he pleaded so earnestly that it might not be done just yet, that much against his better judgment his father consented. This glimpse into his little son's heart affected him very much, and there were tears in his eyes when he told his wife their conversation.

During the summer their cousin, Gerald Annesley, came to spend a few days with them.

It was his first visit, and the boys were delighted to have him. He was nearly two years older than St. Hilary, but both being fond of books they found a great deal to talk about, and after one or two days, in spite of all that St. Hilary could do, Humphrey began to feel neglected. Never had he so envied St. Hilary's love of books as when he realized that his own indifference to them made Gerald regard him as a child. He talked about things that had not hitherto interested the younger boy, rather making light of Humphrey's accomplishments in the way of strength and activity. St. Hilary was divided between the politeness due a guest, one whom he very much admired, and his desire to have his brother show to advantage. On the third day the three boys went fishing; an underkeeper went with them, and for a while they enjoyed their occupation. Then Gerald began telling St. Hilary in a low voice about his big brother's first experience at a boys' school where he himself expected to be sent later on. Humphrey would dearly have liked to hear it all, but Gerald turned quite round to St. Hilary

so that only a word now and then reached the fisherman on his right.

It was the first time that anyone had diverted his brother's attention entirely from himself; a storm of jealousy arose in Humphrey's heart and he began to blame St. Hilary. Why didn't he tell Gerald to turn round and include him in the conversation? St. Hilary wasn't treating him well; he wouldn't stay where he was not wanted. His face got very red, his good resolutions all slipped away; he felt a paroxysm of rage coming on, and throwing down his rod he started along the bank.

St. Hilary caught a glimpse of his face as he turned away, and leaving Gerald without a word he ran after his brother, gaining rapidly on him.

"Stop, Humph," he cried, "I want to speak to you."

"Go away," answered Humphrey, angrily, but St. Hilary was near enough now to throw his arm across his shoulders. The touch seemed to infuriate the angry boy; he shook off St. Hilary's touch and pushed him roughly from him, crying, "Go back to your friend Gerald." They

were near the edge of the bank; the elder boy's foot slipped under the sudden shock of the rough push and he fell backward into the stream. With a horrified shriek that rang on the air, Humphrey sprang after him. For a moment they appeared on the surface of the water, St. Hilary's head lying on his brother's shoulder while the latter held him up, then they disappeared. The keeper dashed to the rescue and in a very short time all three were safe on land again. But St. Hilary's eyes did not open and he looked very white. Humphrey's remorse was dreadful; he threw himself on the silent body, embracing him, kissing him, crying, "Oh! Saintie, I have killed you in my wicked temper."

Taking off his fustian coat, the keeper wrapped the insensible boy in it, and lifting him in his arms they all started for the Hall. Gerald walked beside St. Hilary, but Humphrey ran ahead, his wet curls streaming behind him, his cap gone, and water dripping from his clothes. It was a wild little figure with a very miserable face that burst into the library, crying, "I have killed St.

"Oh! Saintie, I'm just like Black Rupert—I've nearly killed you."
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Hilary! I pushed him into the stream! Oh! mamma, mamma!"

It was a fortunate thing that mamma's arms were so near, for the little fellow's face grew very white as he sunk on her shoulder, while the earl hastened to meet the sad procession which by this time was in the hall.

Dr. Cruthers was hastily summoned; by the time he arrived St. Hilary had recovered consciousness, but extreme quiet was strictly enjoined as the next few days would show how much mischief had been done by the fall into the water. There was such a beseeching expression in the sick boy's eyes that the doctor asked what he wanted. "May I see Humph?" was the eager question. After some deliberation and many cautions they let Humphrey go in. His face was pale and his eyes swollen with weeping; falling on his knees by the bedside he said, trying hard to keep from crying, "Oh! Saintie, I'm just like Black Rupert—I've nearly killed you."

With an effort St. Hilary raised himself, throwing one arm round his brother, and his

voice rang out clear and strong: "Don't say such a thing, Humph; you *didn't* push me into the river—my foot slipped; indeed, it was my own fault. Please don't anybody think it was Humphrey's fault, for it wasn't." Here his voice failed, the doctor interfered, and Humphrey was taken away.

St. Hilary was very ill for several days, and Humphrey's grief was so intense that his parents' hearts ached for their little penitent child. When at last the doctor declared the danger past and Humphrey was allowed to be with St. Hilary, their first interview was significant of their different natures. Climbing up on the bed, Humphrey, after kissing his brother warmly several times, laid his head on the same pillow with him, and snuggling up close, whispered, "Dear, darling old Saintie, it makes me get cold and sick to think you might have been drowned by my dreadful temper. Can you ever forgive me?"

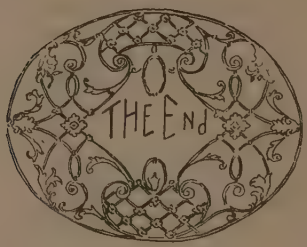
St. Hilary raised himself upon his elbow to look into his brother's eyes. There was an expression on his face that reminded Humphrey of his father.

"There's nothing to forgive, Humph," he said, decidedly. "I shall never believe the slight touch you gave me had anything to do with my fall. I was too near the edge of the bank and my foot slipped, that was the whole trouble. Now kiss me, and we'll never, *never* speak of this again."

And they never did, but his papa had a long talk about it with Humphrey. He spoke very seriously and laid very plainly before him the terrible consequences that might have resulted from his giving way to his temper as he had. He explained very lovingly but very decidedly the difference in their worldly positions, laying great stress on the deep love the little fellows felt for each other. "It is very wrong and un-Christ-like to let anger and jealousy into our hearts, Humphrey," concluded his father, "for we can never tell to what wicked lengths they will take us. Your bad temper is a cross that you may have to carry all your life; it will be very heavy sometimes, but there is One Who can give you strength to bear it. And remember, dear son, if you try to deserve it, a heavenly crown

will be your reward one of these days. You know 'Who endures, conquers.'"

They were sitting in the eastern gallery, and just as papa ceased speaking the sun came from under a cloud, lighting up the whole window and throwing a reflection of the coat-of-arms at their feet. There lay the shield with its cross, above it the crown, underneath the words *Qui patitur vincit.* Deep purple and crimson shadows flickered and danced over them for a few moments, then all disappeared with the sunshine. But Humphrey never forgot the lesson they illustrated.



# Banks and Banks

Sid. Larcom and Billy Haynes were great chums. They studied, skated, coasted and took long walks together, never seeming to tire of each other's society. And during these walks, over hill and dale and through the woods, they talked on many subjects.

For all their love of fun and mischief they were thoughtful boys, and lately they had had plenty to think and talk about.

The young clergyman who had come to the village a few months before was quite unlike anyone the boys had known. In spite of some opposition he had won the hearts, and what was more, had managed to keep the attention of the circle of lads he soon gathered about him. He played a game of football or snowball with as

much zest as any one of them, taught the boys to run and leap and jump on true athletic principles, fitted up a room in the rectory where they might practise gymnastics, and gave them a short scientific lecture once a week on subjects chosen by the boys themselves. These lectures were accompanied by simple but, to the uninitiated, wonderful experiments which deeply interested the boys, and it would have been a real trial for any one of them to stay away from these Friday evening "talks," as the rector called them.

Mr. Newcombe was manly, practical, and very direct in all his dealings—"right square out," the boys said, and they soon learned to respect as well as like him.

He went to some trouble to provide these entertainments for them, and he asked for and expected order and attention, which, after one or two lectures, he got. He talked to them in a reasonable "man-to-man" fashion that won the boys' hearts, and brought out the best there was in them.

One Friday evening after the lecture Mr. Newcombe said, "Boys, I want you all to meet

me in this room next Tuesday evening. I've been giving you talks on subjects that *you* like best, now come Tuesdays and let me talk to you about the thing that *I* like best."

"Any preachin'?" piped up Joe Walters, though Sid. Larcom gave him a sharp nudge with his elbow and whispered, "Hush up!"

"Come and see," answered the rector, smiling. "And if you don't want to, you needn't come a second time."

The boys discussed the matter on their way home. "I 'spose he'll preach and pray the whole evening," said John Symonds, dolefully. "I've a great mind to stay away."

"And I," "And I," came from several of the group.

"Now, look here, boys," Sid. Larcom put his hands on his hips and spoke out decidedly. "If we don't everyone of us go those Tuesday evenings we'll be a mean, sneakin' set. Mr. Newcombe's spent his money to fit up that gymnasium and to get the things for the experiments, and he makes us that welcome we'd hardly know we wasn't in our own homes.

We've taken all he's given us, and now, the first thing he's asked us to do, you're grumbling at. I say, let's all go, and reg'lar, too, it's the least we can do."

"I'll go, sure," cried Billy Haynes, ranging himself beside Sid.

"I guess I will, too," said Ned Fraser, and Tom Collins echoed him.

Sid. and Billy were leaders in their set, and their outspoken decision influenced the others. When Mr. Newcombe entered the cheerful little lecture room the following Tuesday evening every member of the Friday Club was present, and even the boys who had chosen seats near the door with a view to slipping out unseen, could not but be pleased by his bright smile and hearty "Good evening, lads, I'm glad to see you all here."

When Mr. Newcombe said, "Let us pray," John Symonds groaned softly as he dropped on one knee, and two or three of the younger boys snickered.

The rector heard both, but took no notice. "Boys," he said, when they had risen from their

knees, "I'm going to tell you the life of our Saviour Jesus Christ, beginning with His birth. We'll take one or two points each Tuesday evening, and see how what He said and did more than eighteen hundred years ago applies to and affects our lives in these days. We'll have some magic-lantern views as we go along, and anyone that wants to may ask questions." Then the room was darkened and the talk began.

It was very short, but before it was half over those boys on the back seats near the door wished themselves front, and though the meeting closed with another short prayer there was no more talk on anyone's part of staying away on Tuesday evenings.

Gradually it came to these boys that the Saviour had actually lived—been a flesh and blood boy like themselves, that He had run and jumped and played and been tempted like as they were. They began to think and to ask questions and to realize in the light of their new knowledge the power and benefit of His blessed example, and this brought forth fruit.

There were no more groans or snickers during the prayers, and after a while some of the boys began to appear in church on Sunday mornings, following the services and sermon with an attention that delighted their rector though it did not surprise him. He had expected their best and the result did not disappoint him. You know, boys and girls, if you look for the best in people, you will certainly find it.

On the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday Sid. Larcom was obliged to be absent from the "talk."

"I hate to miss it," he said to Billy; "but father and mother've gone to New Fane and they won't be home till to-morrow morning, and granny hates to be left alone nights, so I'll have to stay home and mind her and the place. Take in all Mr. Newcombe says, Billy, and tell me to-morrow at recess. And tell him why I couldn't come. I guess he'll understand."

Once upon a time, not so long ago either, Sid. would have grumbled in pretty strong language at having to give up an engagement for his old

grandmother's sake, and Billy would have upheld him in it, but now Billy said, "All right, Sid., he'll understand, and I'll take in all I can. Good-night." And Sid. walked homeward, whistling softly.

The next day at recess the two "cronies," as Ned Frazer called them, retired to a quiet spot near the schoolhouse. "Well!" said Sid., expectantly.

"Well," replied Billy, with a sly grin. "It was a splendid talk. He says we are banks."

"Banks?" cried Sid. in amazement. "Places where you put in and take out money—like the one in the village?"

Billy nodded, and Sid. whistled a long low note of astonishment, then Billy explained:

"This is the way he came to say it. He was telling us the story of the ten lepers the Saviour made well—that was an awful disease, you should have heard about it. Only one out of the whole lot came back to thank Him, and then our Lord asked where the other nine were. I do think it was sneakin' mean of those fellers, but Mr. Newcombe says that nowadays lots of

people treat the Lord the same way—ask for things and get 'em, and then forget to thank Him for 'em. Then he said besides that God gives us the very best He has to give, and that He has a right to expect the same from us; and that we are God's banks. He puts all sorts of good things into us, like people do money in a bank, and then He draws checks on us for those very things. You know about banking, don't you?"

"Yes," said Sid., "you've got to have something in the bank before you can draw a check."

"He explained all that," continued Billy, "and told us some of the things God has put into us as His banks. Conscience is one, and good-nature, honesty, truthfulness, honor—oh, and good health. Doesn't that seem funny? Mr. Newcombe says these are all pure gold. And that God draws checks on us and expects to be paid in gold—you know, he means the very best we can give. There's lots more I've forgotten; I just wish you'd been there to hear it yourself. Ain't it a funny idea?"

"It does seem kinder queer," answered Sid.

slowly, "but I guess he ain't far wrong. How do the checks come?"

"Oh! I forgot that. Sometimes by some one asking us to do something that tries our patience or our good-nature, or maybe a temptation will come to do something or say something we hadn't ought to, or to take something that ain't ours, or to tell a lie. Them checks are drawn on our conscience, and honesty and truthfulness, and Mr. Newcombe says we must remember it's gold we have to pay out, and just honor the check by overcoming the evil with good. He says sometimes the check is delivered by a cranky person, sometimes by a pleasant one, but a check's a check and we're bound to honor it all the same, no matter when or how it comes ——"

Whack! came a big snowball in Billy's neck.

"Check number one!" cried Sid., holding on to his sides with laughter.

"Honored!" smilingly answered Billy, putting up one hand to brush off the snow.

"That wasn't a very hard one, though," said Sid., when they stopped laughing.

"No," admitted Billy, "though it hurt some, I tell you. Well, I didn't finish. Mr. Newcombe told us about the Lord fasting in the wilderness forty days and forty nights, and the way He was tempted—tell you what, Sid., that was a mighty big check, and no mistake; but He honored it—and then the parson asked us boys to try and honor all the checks that would come to our banks during Lent—you know to-day's Ash Wednesday?" Sid. nodded. "Some of the boys said they would and I'm going to try, too. Will you?"

"Shouldn't wonder if I did," replied Sid. "It don't seem very hard, and I know it'll please him," with a motion of his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the rectory.

"Tom Collins told him that and he didn't like it," said Billy. "He said we ought to do it for Jesus, not for him."

There was a short silence, which Sid. broke by "Well, we'll see. There's the school bell—come on!"

The following Friday evening Mr. Newcombe announced that he would give a prize for the

best written account of the next six scientific lectures. The papers were all to be given in on the Friday night before Easter, and the prize would be awarded the Friday following—in Easter week.

The boys were very much pleased with this offer, and nearly all entered their names to compete for the prize. Among them were Sid. Larcom and Billy Haynes, and every Friday night they came provided with paper and pencils, and took notes.

"Don't let's show each other what we take down," said Sid. "Let each feller be on his own hook."

"All right," replied Billy, "I'm willing."

They were both doing some "banking" these days; sometimes they exchanged confidences on the subject, and sometimes they didn't.

The first week Sid. told Billy, "Why, 'taint hard, and it makes a feller feel good;" to which Billy agreed. But there were days after this when they both agreed that the checks came so fast and for such large amounts that it was very hard to meet them. "I declare, if I hadn't 'a'

promised I'd just give up trying," said Sid. one day. "Father scolded to-day and granny got cross, and I was late to school and missed my lessons, and that John Symonds beat me in the skating race—and I got that ugly—!"

"I know," said Billy, with sympathy—"I've been there myself; but don't you give up, Sid. Take courage and sleep on it before you make up your mind to stop trying. That's what Mr. Newcombe says, and I know it's good advice."

So Sid. slept on his resolution and kept on "banking."

But the week before Easter a big check was unexpectedly presented at his bank—this is the way it happened. When Sid. came to arrange his scientific notes into the form of an essay the facts were so few, and seemed to be so poorly expressed, that he got very much discouraged. Work as he would he could not improve them —and he did so want to win the prize. Mr. Newcombe had said the winner might choose just what he wanted, and Sid. had made up his mind he would take a microscope like the one through which "the parson" showed them such

wonderful things. He had a conviction that Billy knew more than he did about the lectures, but as he had been the one to say each should work out his essay alone, his pride forbade him asking any favors from that quarter.

When school was dismissed on the Wednesday before the Friday on which the essays were to be given in, Sid.'s cap was not to be found. As he lived a long way from the schoolhouse, and the day was bitter cold, and he had his essay to finish, the loss was a matter of importance to Sid. The amount of good-nature and patience to his credit in his bank almost gave out.

"Never mind, Sid," said Billy, coming to the rescue. "Wear my tam-o'-shanter home. I live near, you know; I can tie a handkerchief over my head to get there, and to-morrow I can wear my Sunday hat till you come. Take it, I tell you—I mean it." So Sid. accepted the offer and started homeward.

But though Billy was a little shorter than Sid. his head was larger, and the cap slipped about on its new wearer's head. After steadying

it several times Sid. took off the cap and turned out the lining to see if he could stuff it to fit his head. In the crown lay a flat paper, which Sid. lifted out intending to fold it inside the lining. A few written words caught his eye; then he opened the paper and eagerly read it through.

It was Billy's essay—so complete, so well expressed that Sid. knew at once his own poor description had no chance beside it. Then it was that temptation came to Sid. The check presented was on his honesty and honor, and oh! the pity of it, children, he refused to honor it.

Before the boy reached home he had made up his mind to rewrite his essay, working into it the best points of Billy's article. He rushed upstairs and began operations. The more he went over Billy's work the less he liked his own, and finally he copied the whole essay, merely adding a few lines from his own, and signed his name.

Sid. knew he was doing a mean thing; he got so nervous over it that his mother's step outside the door made him jump violently, and he scarcely slept that night.

The next morning he returned the cap to its owner, having destroyed the paper which he had found in it. For the next few days he was so unlike his usual cheerful self, so cross and short, and he avoided Billy so steadily that the latter noticed it.

Nearly all the Tuesday night boys met Mr. Newcombe in the church on Holy Thursday afternoon, but Sid. Larcom was absent. He refused so sharply to come with them that even faithful Billy got ruffled and left him to himself.

On Friday evening the essays were given in. Billy Haynes came in late and was the last to hand in his envelope. Then all trooped out.

Sid. slipped away to walk home alone. He was very unhappy. Now that the essay was out of his reach he would have given a good deal to recall it. Billy's devoted love and staunch championship came to his remembrance, and with it all a recollection of his Lenten promise. He had dishonored the biggest check that had ever been presented at his bank! He called himself "a mean hound!" and a wave of intense humiliation and sorrow swept over his heart. Turning, he

walked rapidly back to the rectory and was admitted. The moment he entered the study Mr. Newcombe saw something was wrong.

"Why, Sid., my boy," he said, kindly, turning from the table on which lay the essays, "what's the matter?"

"This bank's busted!" cried poor Sid., hoarsely, and it's no disgrace to him that two big tears ran down his cheeks.

In a few moments the whole story was out, and the boy stood in shamefaced silence.

"Oh, Sid., I'm *so* sorry," said Mr. Newcombe, sadly, and that touched Sid. more than the most severe scolding could have done. "You must go right to Billy and confess your fault," continued the rector. "And, of course, I shall have to count you out of the applicants for the prize."

"Oh, I know that, sir,——" began Sid. A knock on the door interrupted him.

"Is Sid. Larcom in there, Mr. Newcombe?" asked Billy's voice. "If he is I just want to wait for him."

"Let him in," cried Sid., eagerly. "I might as well have it out with him now." So Billy

"Why, old fellow, I don't mind one bit."

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came in, his honest little face full of perplexity at the sight of Sid.'s troubled one.

"Oh, that's where it went to," he said when Sid. had told his story. "Why, old fellow, I don't mind one bit, only I'm sorry you dishonored your check, and if parson'll let you, you're welcome to use the essay. When I couldn't find it high nor low I just wrote another,—I had the notes, you know—that's what made me late this evening,—but it's all different from the other, so you can use it just as well as not. Mayn't he, sir?" turning to Mr. Newcombe.

"I tell you, Billy, you're a bank worth talking about," Sid. broke out in admiration, giving his chum a hearty slap on the shoulder.

"No," answered the rector, "I couldn't allow that, Billy, and I am sure Sid. wouldn't want it. Another thing, he has confessed his fault to you and been forgiven, but there is One whose pardon he has not yet asked. Sid., you have grieved One who loves you better than Billy does, and you must win His forgiveness, too, before peace can come to your heart. You know Whom I mean?"

"Yes, sir," said Sid, in a low voice, getting very red in the face and shuffling one foot over the other. "I mean to do it. And—and—will you and Billy pray for me, too?"

"Oh, Sid.!" cried Billy, choking up. "As if I was any better'n you."

"We will pray together," said Mr. Newcombe, gently. And so they did, right there in the rector's study, and the two boys went out to their homes comforted and strengthened to do better service for God.

It was Saturday morning, and Adrian and Robin had been enjoying themselves even more than they usually did on their much-prized holiday. They had made their weekly tour around the place; had visited patient old Bloss and her long-legged calf, and given the ponies, Jack and Jill, their Saturday treat of apples and turnips; they had fed the pigeons and counted and divided the new rabbits; they had had great fun helping Jake chase some young pigs from the orchard into their pens, and now, as they rested on the steps of the front piazza, the two boys fell into a discussion.

There was a difference of a little more than a year between the children, but they were such inseparable companions that big brother Jack

had nicknamed them "the twinsies." They slept, walked, rode, played and went to school together, and papa was right when he said he thought that neither really enjoyed a pleasure which was not shared by the other.

In all their plans and games Robin, though the younger, was the leader. He was only a trifle shorter than Adrian, and had brighter eyes and hair and a more confident manner.

Adrian was not so active as his younger brother; he cared very little for tennis; to climb to the top of a tree or to swing very high made him dizzy, and he was not the fearless swimmer or rider that Robin was. This troubled his papa sometimes; he and the two older boys, Jack and Norman, were so fond of athletic sports.

"I hope that boy isn't going to be a molly-coddle," he said several times. But mamma always smiled, reassuringly.

"Don't be alarmed, my dear," she would say. "Adrian's nerves are not quite so strong as those of the other boys, but rest assured, he is no coward."

Meanwhile the discussion on the front piazza

"Robin, though the younger, was the leader."

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was growing animated. It had been started by Jake's saying: "If them pigs ain't enough to try a saint!" as he darted hither and thither after the sleek, slippery little grunters.

"I say, there never was but one kind of saints, and they're all dead. They were awfully good people, who had to go through a lot of hardships because they were Christians. They got burned and killed and everything," cried Robin, positively, standing with his feet planted firmly on the gravel path and his hands in the pockets of his short sailor suit. "I know they're all dead. I think grandpa said so."

"No, he didn't, Robin," contradicted Adrian. "And the saints are *not* all dead—at least, one kind is, but one kind is living, too." Then, as Robin laughed at this remark, he added, "I know what I mean but I can't explain it. I do wish mamma had not gone to town with Jack. Shall we ask Nor? He is in the library."

"Well, we might try him, but I don't think he'll know," said Robin. They raced through the hall and burst into the library where Norman sat working out a mathematical problem. His

hair was ruffled up, his brows were knitted. Norman was a better athlete than mathematician.

"Well, kids, what brings you here?" he asked, eying the little boys severely.

"We want to find out about saints," began Robin.

"Oh, you do!" said Norman, with mock politeness. "Well, I'm sorry I can't give you the desired information, my acquaintance with them being exceedingly limited. Now suppose you retire."

"I think that was real mean of Norman," said Robin, when they were out on the piazza again.

"So it was," assented Adrian. "But never mind him. I know what we'll do—let's go to the blacksmith's shop. Andy'll be able to tell us."

"That's so. Come on, we'll race down."

And so they did, with many a shout and much laughter, bursting into Andrew's shop like a small whirlwind. Robin's cap had disappeared; Adrian's tam-o'-shanter was over on one ear and he carried one of his low shoes dangling by its strings.

"Hulloa, Andy," cried the boys in one laughing breath. "Here's a horse to be shod. This horse has cast a shoe."

"All right, gentlemen," said kind, stalwart Andy, entering into the spirit of the joke. "Here's a new kind of shoe just ready, and a hammer handy. You can put it on yourself in about two minutes."

"Let me be blacksmith?" begged Robin. "I'm sure I know how to put the shoe on. I've watched Andy often enough. Come, pony, get into position."

So Adrian slipped on his shoe and going down on all fours let Robin take one of his legs between his knees in the way they had often seen Andrew do when shoeing a horse.

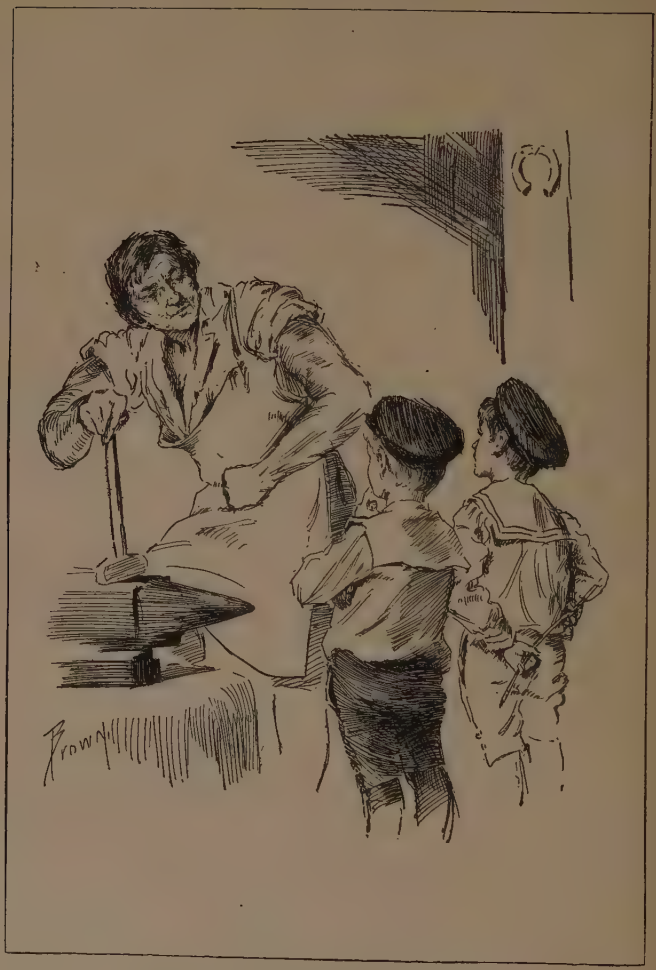
Armed with a hammer and some small tacks Robin set to work to fasten a narrow strip of iron to the sole of Adrian's shoe, while Andrew stopped working for a few minutes to smile down upon the two children.

The new pony soon became very restive; he whinnied, he hee-hawed like a donkey, and kicked up his heels at the most inopportune

times. "Whoa there!" cried Robin for about the tenth time. "I declare you are enough to try a saint!"

"Why, that's what we came about," cried Adrian, suddenly. "And if we hadn't forgotten all about it! Andy, aren't there two kinds of saints? I know that those who lived long ago were the ones who were tortured and put to death cruelly because they were Christians, but isn't there another kind besides? And don't they live now-a-days, too?"

"I say there was only one kind, and they're all dead," eagerly broke in Robin, letting Adrian's foot fall, though the new shoe was not all fastened on. "Weren't St. Matthew and St. Luke and St. James saints? Well," as Andy nodded, "I'm sure they are all dead. I learned about them the other day. St. Matthew was killed with the sword at Ethiopia in Egypt; St. Luke was hanged on an olive tree in Greece; St. James the Great was beheaded at Jerusalem; the other St. James—the Less, I mean—was thrown headlong from a pinnacle of the temple; St. Paul was beheaded at Rome by Nero; St.



"You know I'm not as brave as you are."

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Andrew was crucified on a cross the shape of an X—and oh, there are ever so many more. How they did suffer! That's what *I* call being a saint. And weren't they brave, Andy? I'd like to have lived then." The little boy's fair face was flushed, his blue eyes sparkled with enthusiasm.

"Oh, would you?" cried Adrian. "Could you have had the courage to endure being tortured, or burned, or beheaded, or thrown to wild beasts? I am afraid I could not; you know I'm not as brave as you are."

"I could," said Robin, confidently. "I know I could. I'm not afraid of anything—see here." As he spoke he laid the first finger of his left hand on a piece of red-hot iron which Andy had just put on the anvil.

"Oh, don't! don't!" exclaimed Adrian, pulling his brother back, while Andrew dashed the little hand away, crying, "You foolish boy!"

"Pooh, it doesn't hurt—much," said Robin, putting the burnt hand into his pocket and trying to ignore the keen smarting which had just begun.

"You *are* brave, Robin," Adrian said in awe-struck tones. "I *couldn't* have done that."

"Now, see here, boys," said Andrew, very seriously. "This isn't at all the spirit that filled the saints and martyrs. *They* didn't pride themselves on their bravery, they were too humble-minded for that. Who could have endured intense suffering and a terrible death in a braver manner than our dear Lord Himself, and was there ever a boast heard from His lips? Some of the saints and martyrs were as weak physically as they could be; faint and wasted from starvation; bruised and broken by torture; many of them delicate and timid, and the courage with which they met death only came to them through their great faith in Christ. He it was who gave so many of them strength to die with serene composure—even with words of forgiveness for their enemies. The mere fact of their meeting death bravely would not make them saints; a savage could do that, you know. Their saintliness lies in the great love they bore their Master, and that they endured all they did for His sake. All those who strive to follow

the Master's example, and who live holy lives, denying themselves for Christ's sake, are saints."

"Then isn't it anything to be brave?" asked Robin, with a sickening consciousness that the pain in his finger was increasing.

"Yes," said Andrew, "if a boy's bravery makes him patient, humble, gentle, truthful and better able to stand up for his Saviour, then it's a grand thing for him to have, but if it only makes him proud and vain, and fond of showing off, then he'd better be a coward and know it."

Robin's cheeks were very red; he stood with downcast eyes kicking the base of the anvil without a word.

"Well, I think it's splendid to be brave like Robin," cried Adrian, warmly, throwing his arm around his brother's shoulders.

"Bravery alone 'll never make anyone a saint," was Andrew's reply. "Why, boys, I know a man who is so timid that if you should jump out suddenly on him in fun he'd take to his heels and run, and yet he is a saint and a brave one, too."

"A saint! A living saint!" cried Robin.

"Yes, a saint. His life is so holy, his patient endurance of all his trials (and he's got heaps of them) so beautiful, and his love and trust in his Saviour so real, that he is an example and help to all who know him, and he is so humble that he does not dream what an influence he has over others. He is a real saint, he is, and we can all be saints, too, if we try hard enough and ask for help from above."

"That's what grandpa said one day," exclaimed Adrian. "I remember now, he said grandma was a saint because she was so patient and gentle—so Christ-like he called it—though she had to lie on a lounge all the time and couldn't walk a step like other people. That's what made me think there were living saints as well as dead ones."

"Think of that to-morrow, dear lads," said Andy. "You know to-morrow will be All Saints' Day, and give thanks to God for the example of all His saints, the living, as well as those in Paradise."

The boys took a "short-cut" home, and as they climbed the narrow path which wound

along the steep hill-side, back of the blacksmith's shop, Robin's foot slipped on the dry, sunburnt grass; in his effort to save himself he caught hold of his brother and both rolled down the steep descent with a rapidity they had not imagined possible. Over sticks and stones they flew until they crashed suddenly through some bushes into a deep, dark hole at the bottom of the hill. They came down with a heavy thud, Adrian under, and it was a second or two before either of the boys spoke. Then Robin said, as he rolled into a sitting position, "Oh, my head! I've hit my head an awful blow, and I think it's bleeding—something wet's running down my face. Oh!" with a little scream, as something soft and slippery ran over his hand. "Oh! Ad., where are we? Oh! this is horrible. How'll we ever get out?"

"I think we've fallen through a hole, into the slope of the old mine," said Adrian, slowly. Robin thought his voice sounded queerly. "I've heard papa say it was full of dangerous places, so be careful how you move about."

Poor Robin was very uncomfortable and un-

happy. It seemed to him that his head and his hand were running a race to try which could throb hardest, and Adrian lay there without saying a word to comfort him. "I think this is horrible," he repeated, breaking into an uncontrollable sob. "A lot of nasty things are walking all over me, and I don't know what to do to get out of this hole."

"Don't cry, Rob," said Adrian, gently. "I'll try—let's go in this direction." On their hands and knees, Adrian going first, very slowly they felt their way about in the darkness, calling "Help! help!" as loudly as they could.

The time had appeared very long to them; but in reality only a little while had elapsed since they fell off the hill path before they heard Andrew's welcome voice shouting directly overhead, "Hold on, boys, stay just where you are. I am coming to you."

In a very few moments he appeared, crouching under the low roof, with a small lantern attached to his cap. "Which shall I take first?" he asked, peering into the darkness.

"Take Robin," answered Adrian. "I'm afraid

he has cut his head badly." And without any demur Robin allowed himself to be lifted in Andrew's strong arms and be carried up into the blessed sunshine and air again.

Hastily placing Robin on his feet, Andrew again descended, to reappear in a few minutes with Adrian, who lay white and still in his arms. "He's hurt his foot—sprained it, I guess," he explained to the frightened little brother. "Now for home as fast as we can go." And as they walked rapidly along in silence Robin made two discoveries which filled him with surprise. One was, that his head was not cut at all and that it was water, not blood, running down the side of his face, the other, that Adrian, not he, had acted the braver part. Nor were his feelings soothed when Andrew asked, slyly, "Shall I tell the doctor to bring a needle to sew up your wound, Robin?"

As mamma bent over Adrian he opened his eyes to say, "Look after Robin first, he's hurt his head," then fainted away as his sprained ankle was touched.

That night, after Adrian had been carefully

put to bed in mamma's dressing-room, so as to be nearer to her, Robin gave his mother a long and full account of the day's proceedings.

"I always thought I was so much braver than Adrian," he said, sadly, at last. "I've teased him many a time about it—in fun, you know, and yet, there was he, hurt badly and never saying a word about it, only trying to comfort me, and there was I, crying like a big baby! I am ashamed. Am I really a coward, mamma? Andrew as much as said, to-day, that I wasn't really brave. But am I a coward?" The blue eyes looked anxiously up at her.

"No, my boy," said mamma, gently, "but I am afraid you were getting boastful and conceited about your courage and you needed taking down. God does not love to see such a spirit in His children. You remember that 'Pride goeth before a fall!' As soon as you begin to think more highly than you ought to of any good or fine quality which you possess, be sure you're in danger. And sometimes, dear, our strongest point is just the one we should ask God to help us guard the closest. You know

Moses was the meekest man, yet Moses sinned through anger—when he smote the rock at Kadesh instead of speaking to it as God had commanded. Job was the most patient man, yet Job sinned through impatience. St. Peter was very brave, yet he sinned by cowardly denying his Lord. So you see, little son, it is very necessary to guard the strong places as well as the weak ones."

"Oh, mamma, do you think I could *ever* be good enough to be a saint?" whispered Robin, as mamma gave him his good-night kiss.

"Yes, my darling, I do," was the earnest answer. "To be a saint is not to be perfect, but it is to be 'given to God.' It is to love Him very dearly and to strive to be like Him in everything that we say or do. This can only be done through"——mamma paused—

"Through the help of Jesus Christ our Lord," reverently finished Robin. "I'm so glad we've had this talk, mamma. Please give my dear love to Adrian again, and tell him I shall miss him dreadfully to-night."

THEY had always had a hard life, poor little waifs! and within the past few weeks things had gone "wuss'n ever," as Buddie would have expressed it. A drunken orgie had resulted in the arrest of the wicked pair the children called parents, and for two weeks Buddie and Madge, two miserable dirty mites of humanity, had existed as best they might on stray bits and ends, and had slept in old wagons and in cellars, their cause of rejoicing being the absence of kicks and cuffs, of which all their life long they had had a liberal supply. But one bitter cold day, when the streets were covered with ice and snow, Buddie had slipped and fallen across the railroad track, the car wheels going over both thin little

legs, and had been carried off, pale and insensible, to the nearest hospital, leaving Madge crying bitterly alone in the street.

A poor little street Arab, as lonely as ever a human being could be, with an awful vague terror tugging at her heart, a terror that overflowed in great splashing tears which made lines down a very dirty face, and were rubbed away by a pair of very dirty hands.

But time was too valuable to be wasted in that way, and with a fist in one eye and the other eye on the fast retreating ambulance, Madge dashed along, digging her bare toes into the slippery ground to avoid falling, keeping up a steady gait which gradually told in her favor, for she reached the corner in time to see the wagon drive under the archway of the hospital. Seating herself on the top stair of the entrance she waited patiently for some one to come out. At last one of the doctors came along with a rapid step.

"Please, sir!" cried Madge, springing to her feet and catching at his coat, "won't yer tell me how Buddie is?"

"Who is Buddie? What do you want?" cried the doctor, impatiently.

"He's me brother," explained the little shrill voice; "he's been run over an' they've jest bringed him here. Won't yer tell me how he is? He looked jest like a dead person when they kerried him in—can't yer tell me nothin' 'bout him, sir?" with a quiver in her voice that threatened to end in a sob.

"No, I know nothing about the matter," said the doctor, quickly. "Come around to-morrow morning and some one will tell you how he is. You can't see him now," and he walked rapidly away. He could easily have found out for her and thus saved her all those hours of waiting, but he had an engagement for dinner (he was a rising young man, well spoken of in the profession), and why should he risk being late for a dirty little beggar! So he went his way without another thought for the wretched little object crouching down in one corner of the wide step, sobbing and shivering with hunger and cold.

"Poor Buddie!" she sobbed, the dirty fingers

acting industriously as a pocket handkerchief. "Seems like he's allus havin' somethin' happen to him, for all he's so good an' quiet-like. I'se the wicked one, and yet I never is hurt. He did look orfull when they took him up, but the p'leeceman he said it wor only a faintin' spell. S'pose he'll be well in a couple weeks, anyhow," trying to put away the great dread which would come uppermost. "People don't die from sich a thing, leastways he won't, for Buddie is stronger 'n he looks—he is."

But it was several days before Madge was allowed to see Buddie, and then she scarcely recognized him. In a small white bed lay the little fellow, his face clean and very pale, his hair brushed smoothly off his forehead.

"Hey! Madge," he said, smiling faintly and holding out his hand. "How've yer bin? Thought as how yer'd forgot me."

"Forgot yer, Buddie!" cried Madge, great tears welling up into her eyes. "'Taint likely, I can tell yer. Every night the last thing I thinks of is yer. I dreams of yer, and the fust thing in the mornin' I thinks of yer again. I'se cried for

"Hey! Madge," he said, smiling faintly and holding out his hand. "How've yer bin? Thought as how yer'd forgot me."

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yer every night, Buddie, an' I would o' come to see yer before ef they'd a let me.'

"Guess I'se been purty sick," said Buddie, with a kind of pride in the statement. "I don't 'member 'bout much; been kinder wild, yer know. How d'ye get along, Madge? Where yer been eatin' an' sleepin?"

"Oh! nowhar in pertickiler," replied Madge, carelessly, waiving the question. "I don't take no pleasure in nothin' sence yer been sick, Buddie. I'se so lonely; I misses yer, I do. An' I've bringed yer somethin' I thought yer might like."

Carefully undoing several dingy-looking pieces of paper, she produced with great pride a small red orange, and laid it on the bed.

"My!" cried Buddie, who fully appreciated the delicate attention. "Ain't it a nice one? Why, Madge, yer's wery kind to spend yer money on me. Say, yer'll have a piece, won't yer?"

"No, thank yer," said Madge, firmly, her tone belying the wistful look in her eyes. "I don't want none an' I ain't agoin' to take it. I'se bought it for yer, an' I wants yer to eat it all.

Lors! a orange like that ain't nothin' to me. Go on an' eat it yerself."

Not a word about the empty stomach that was craving to be filled, or the strong self-denial that had been required to get even that small orange, but I think Buddie guessed it all for he repeated softly, "Yer's very kind, Madge," and began to tear off the skin."

"Is it good?" asked Madge, bending forward eagerly.

"Good!" cried Buddie, smacking his lips. "Good ain't the name for it. It's about the bestest orange I ever eat."

"The man said as how it wor good," said Madge, with an air of satisfaction; "but oranges is very deceivin' sometimes."

"Say, Madge," said the boy, presently, "there's a lady as comes and reads to me sence I bin here, and she do say some curis things. 'Member we went to Sunday-school long 'go till marm foun' us out an' beat us fur goin'?"

Madge nodded.

"'Member wot the teacher tole us 'bout the Lord Jesus a comin' down on earth, and how

they killed him? *Don't* yer 'member?" disappointment in his voice.

"Yes," said Madge, slowly. "But yer know, Buddie, marm sed it wor a lie wot the teacher tole us."

"It wor *not* a lie," cried Buddie, earnestly. "Fur this lady wot comes to see me she tells me the same thing, an' I'd b'lieve her any day 'gainst marm. I wish yer could hear her, she talks so as it goes right to a feller's heart. Mebbe I'll ask her to wait and read to yer, too, to-morrer."

Just then the nurse said Madge must go as Buddie was still very weak, so she went, after consenting to accept, as a great favor, the skin of the orange, declaring there was nothing she liked better.

After this Madge was allowed to see Buddie every day, and made the acquaintance of the lady who read to Buddie, and listened while she explained in simple, forcible language the wonderful story of our Redemption. Buddie asked many questions and was deeply interested, but Madge sat silent on the floor, her big, hungry

eyes just coming above the edge of her brother's cot, drinking in every word, but saying nothing whatever.

And all this time Buddie was growing weaker instead of stronger, "wasting away," the nurse called it; and one dark day when Madge came they were all about his bed, the nurse and the doctor, and the lady who read to him was kneeling by him. He was very pale, and was breathing slowly and with great effort, but there was no trembling, no shrinking; calmly, even cheerfully, Buddie met the great Destroyer.

"Oh! Madge," he said, with a faint smile; "I'se orfull glad to see yer. I was 'fraid yer wouldn't get here in time."

"Fur wot?" asked Madge, the old terror stealing over her.

"I'se a-going—fast, don't yer see it?" said Buddie, calmly.

"A-dyin'!" cried Madge, shrilly. "Oh! yer's a-foolin'. Ain't he a-foolin'?" addressing the lady. Then throwing out her arms across him, "Oh! Buddie, I don't want yer to go, I ain't got nobody but yer."

"That's the one thing wot worrits me," said the boy, slowly. "Ef I could take yer with me I'd like it fust rate. Yer know, Madge, I thinks a lot o' yer; you an' I has allus hung together and it do go agen me to leave yer behind, but wot kin I do? The dear Lord, He says fur me to come alone, an' I has to go. An' I ain't on-willin' to go, fur tho' I ain't spoke much 'bout it, I'se been orfull tired sometimes—an' I've axed Him to look arter you, Madge, *pertickeler*."

"You're not afraid to die, Buddie?" asked the lady.

"No!" said Buddie, simply, "'Cause the Lord's a-waitin' fur me on the other side. He promised He would, yer know, an' I ain't 'fraid He'll go back on His word—Madge, will yer meet me by'mby? I'll be a-watchin' fur yer. Say, will yer come?"

"I'll try," cried poor Madge, with a violent burst of tears. "But I don't expect to get ther; yer knows, Buddie, I'se allus been wicked."

Buddie's eyes were closing. "Sing 'I was weary, too,'" he whispered. So the lady sang slowly and softly:

"'Well I know thy trouble,
O my servant true;
Thou art very weary,
I was weary, too.'"

When she finished the last line little Buddie was no longer weary.

* * * * * * *

Up and down the streets Madge wandered. It was a bitter cold day; a sharp, biting wind penetrated thick overcoats and fur-lined cloaks, and pierced through and through the child's thin dress, nipping her bare toes and legs, and pinching and turning blue and purple her small, wasted face. Miserable, cold, starving, she wandered on and on, conscious only of her great misery, moaning sometimes in a faint, weak way that was very touching.

The shades of a large, handsome house were drawn high up, so that the light shone out. Stealing up the massive stoop she peeped into one of the windows. Such a glow of light and warmth, red curtains, red carpet, bright, cheery grate fires, dancing and snapping; people in the parlors, a lady and a little girl about as big as

Madge. "Guess I'll ring the bell and beg for somethin' to eat. Mebbe they won't refuse me here." So she rang the bell, and after a while (an age it appeared to the poor little beggar) a footman opened the door.

"*Please* give me somethin' to eat," pleaded Madge. "I'se orfull hungry. I ain't had nothin' for more'n two days. I'll take anythin' yer got."

The man looked pitifully at her and hesitated. The lady came to the parlor door; she was richly dressed.

"Is it a beggar, John? What impertinence to ring the bell. Shut the door *at once;* you are letting a great deal of cold air into the house. You know I never encourage beggars, I have nothing for them."

So the door was shut, and she went back to her comfortable room and warm fire, but before her mind would come the miserable little figure, a thin small shawl over its head, two big, wistful eyes staring at her, and into her ears the cry, "I'se orfull hungry," until her comfort was almost destroyed.

Wandering again—through a small side street this time, filled with flats and tenement houses. Not a creature was to be seen on the street. And to add to the misery of the night snow began to fall, and was blown hither and thither in a wild fashion by the merciless wind.

Crawling up the stoop of one of the houses, Madge tried to shelter herself as best she might, cowering down in a little heap, her feet scrouched up under her short skirts, her two hands folded under her cheek. If she had only rung this bell how gladly any of the inmates would have fed and warmed her, but the poor little hands were too numb now, and the terrible gnawing hunger was passing away. A quiet, sleepy feeling was coming over her, the wind ceased to worry her; her mind wandered vaguely from one thing to another until she reached the thought of Buddie, and there it rested with a great and calm satisfaction.

"I'se glad he went fust," she thought. "Now he'll be there to meet me, and make me kinder to home. I ain't tried half hard 'nough, but still I *hev* tried, and mebbe that'll count fur me

by'm'by. I don't swear no more; I'se tried to get somethin' to do, an' I'se done it honest when I had it. I'se been to church time and agen; I'se sed Buddie's hymn nights. 'Taint much, but it's the best I kin do, an' mebbe He'll take that inter consideration. Buddie sed as how his Jesus was orfull poor one time. An' He wor God's own Son, an' had everythin' ef he had a-choose to take it. But he lef' Heaven an' come down here a-purpose to die, so all on us might hev a chance. Buddie he wor sure he wor a-goin to Heaven, but I ain't; but then he wor allus kinder good, an' I ain't. But mebbe the dear Lord Jesus'll forgive me fur bein' so wicked, and let me come to Heaven to be with Him an' Buddie."

A choir boy on the first floor was practising for Sunday, and the sweet soprano voice rang out through a broken pane in the window, and fell on the half-deaf ears of the child.

> "Well I know thy trouble,
> O my servant true;
> Thou art very weary,
> I was weary, too."

"Buddie's hymn," she murmured—"'I was weary, too.'"

A full sense of the perfect love of the dear Lord suddenly dawned on the child's mind, and sent a thrill of joy through the poor frozen limbs. The little stiff lips quivered.

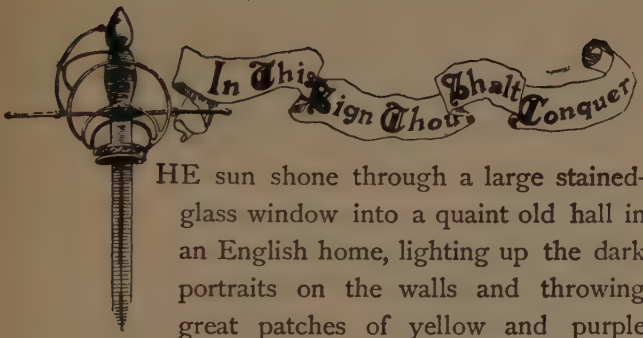
"*Dear* Jesus," she whispered. "*My dear* Lord Jesus."

The wind still blew sharp and piercing, the snow still came down, but it seemed to touch the little prostrate form more gently, falling softly on her hair and face, nestling in her neck, smoothing out the miserable garments, covering up the little bare feet—falling, falling, falling, fair and white.

When they found her in the morning there was a sweet smile on the childish mouth, and such an expression of perfect peace and rest on the thin face, that they said to one another in wonder, "Freezing can't be such a terrible death—she looks happy." And well she might, for all the want and starvation, and ignorance and sin were left behind, and "It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the things

which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Oh, ye that are able, ye that are rich, remember the poor; give generously, give with both hands, "Full measure, pressed down, and running over;" for so will God reward you. Even if nine out of every ten prove undeserving and ungrateful, the tenth may be one of "these little ones" whom the Lord has commended to our care, and of whom we shall have to render an account by and by.




THE sun shone through a large stained-glass window into a quaint old hall in an English home, lighting up the dark portraits on the walls and throwing great patches of yellow and purple and red sunshine on the polished floor and wide, shallow staircase. Around the sides of the hall, above the pictures, ran a white strip like a ribbon, on which was printed in odd-shaped red and black letters the lines, "To vs alle Gode gravnt grace of our offendynge, Space to ovr amendynge, and His face to be seen at ovr endynge. Amen." Following the shape of the arched window was the motto of the old crusaders, "*In hoc signo vinces*,"—"In this sign thou shalt conquer," with the halo of the cross spreading out in brilliant rays over the small diamond

panes. The colors in the window were very rich, and the shadow of the cross fell brilliantly on the old-fashioned pictures, the suits of armor ranged about the corners, and the figure of a little boy who sat half way up the stairs, his elbows resting on his knees, his chin in his palms, and the big blue eyes which looked up at the glowing window high above his head full of eager interest. The boy's name was Cuthbert Chaloner. A step or two below him knelt his favorite sister and constant companion, Muriel.

"Oh! don't I wish I had lived in those days," cried Cuthbert, regretfully, waving his hand toward the window. "I'd have made those Saracens fly! And I'd never have rested till I reached Jerusalem like brave Godfrey of Boulogne. Fancy me, Muriel, tearing along at the head of my troops, waving my sword and shouting my battle cry, '*In hoc signo vinces!*' Hurrah! I tell you we'd have won the victory every time."

"And I would have worked your standard for you," said Muriel. "A flag like that,"—pointing

"Fancy me, Muriel, tearing along at the head of my troops."
(Page 4.)

to a faded silken shred that hung on the wall—"only fresh and beautiful, with colors as bright as those in the window. The cross would have have been the most beautiful of all, and our motto. You should have had it to remind you of me."

"You could never have made a flag like that," was Cuthbert's ungrateful reply.

"Yes, I could—if I had lived then," answered Muriel; "girls did nothing those days but sit and sew all the time. And when pilgrims came with news from the Holy Land I'd have given them all sorts of grand gifts—a whole roasted ox—or perhaps," hastily, seeing argument in Cuthbert's eye, "as much of it as they could eat, and if they told of the valiant deeds you had done, or the many battles you had won, I'd have given them money."

"Ah," sighed her brother, "those were the times. There's no use in being brave now, there's nothing to do — no hard things, I mean."

"Oh, yes, there are," said Muriel, nodding her head, wisely. "You ought to have heard papa

and Colonel Erskine this afternoon. I'm so sorry you had that horrid lesson to study just then. You know Colonel Erskine was in India when they had that trouble about a year ago, and oh! if you could hear the stories he tells you wouldn't think there was nothing for brave men to do in these days."

"Yes?" questioned Cuthbert, eagerly.

"Yes," went on Muriel. "He told us a story about a young fellow in his regiment—it was this way: our troops were betrayed by a false spy; there were nearly three times as many sepoys—fierce, horrible creatures—as there were soldiers, and he says things were looking pretty desperate when Jock got wounded. He dropped when the shot struck him, but when one of the soldiers ran to help him he said, 'No, no, don't stop for me; I'm all right,' and by and by he dragged himself to one side, and cheered and encouraged his comrades with such brave words that they didn't dream he was seriously injured until after fresh troops had come to their rescue and the enemy had been routed. Then they found that both Jock's legs had been shattered."

"What became of him? Did he get well?" asked Cuthbert eagerly, as his sister paused.

Muriel shook her head. "He had waited too long before help came. But the soldiers buried him with honors. They wrapped the only flag they had around him and fired a military salute over his grave. They declared he was a hero and that if he had lived he ought to have had the Victoria Cross for his endurance. When Colonel Erskine finished the story papa said, 'Jock was a true hero, because he put his sufferings aside that he might help some one,' and the colonel just pointed to that cross in the window—we were sitting in the hall—and said, in such a voice that a big lump came in my throat, 'In that sign he conquered. Jock was merely following the example of his Master.' I wish you had heard it, Bert."

"I wish I had," said Cuthbert. "I'll get him to tell it to me the next time he comes, so I can tell Tom Baker. I know he'll want to hear it."

"You think such a lot of that common boy"—there was a suspicion of jealousy in Muriel's tone.

"Indeed, he isn't common, Muriel, for all his rough ways Tom's just splendid—and he can train a pup equal to any keeper," which last statement settled the question of Tom's worth.

When Colonel Erskine rode over to the Priory the next day the children were waiting for him down by the lodge gate, and they coaxed until they persuaded him to retell them the story of Jock; hanging on his words, and asking questions with an eager interest that pleased the old veteran, and induced him to give them some details of Jock's life, as he had known it. They learned of his open countenance and kindly heart, and of the merry pranks he used to play on his brother officers until they declared he cared for nothing but fun; and of how they had changed their minds when they learned to know his simple-hearted manliness, how he scorned a lie or a mean action, and was not ashamed to confess his Master before men.

The children were deeply impressed, and it was a grievance to Muriel that she could not go with her brother to tell the story to Tom Baker.

Cuthbert found Tom in the stable-yard, sur-

rounded by a litter of bull-pups which were occupying his entire attention. Out of the yard Tom gave his young master the most respectful service; inside of it, however, he accepted with a proper sense of the fitness of things, the deference which Cuthbert paid to his superior knowledge. After the dogs had been put through their tricks and been duly admired, and put back in their kennels, Cuthbert began his story.

Save for one or two questions, Tom listened in silence until the end, but his small eyes sparkled and his homely face flushed as the little boy sprang to his feet, crying:

"Can't you just think you're there, Tom? The shots pinging on every side, those black creatures screaming and yelling, our men doing their duty nobly, and Jock, over in one corner, his coat over his poor legs, encouraging them by every brave word he could think of! *That* was being a hero, Tom—I'd like to be a hero and do some great deed—wouldn't you?"

"Well," said Tom, slowly, "I'm afeard I couldn't never be a 'ero—leastways I couldn't dash out gallant like; but I *could* 'ang on like

one o' them there bull-pups ef I thought t'was my dooty to. But I don't never expect to be a sodger, though I'd like to—ef you was."

Tom was several years older than Cuthbert and learned in the mysteries of dog training, so his little master's heart swelled with pride at this delicate compliment. "Just wait till I grow up, Tom," he cried, his little fair face flushing. "Papa has promised that I shall go in the army, and I'll take you with me as my squire. Ah! I thought you'd like that. Now don't you think we'd better begin right away to practise—so we'll be used to such things before we grow up? I wish we knew how to drill."

"My sister's 'usband's cousin's son's a sodger," broke in Tom, "and he's got a little book as tells all about it. I can get it off him an' we can drill out o' that."

"All right! that'll be jolly," cried Cuthbert, delightedly; so the boys parted with the understanding that Tom should get the book on military tactics and that the first drill should take place the next afternoon in a quiet corner of the grounds.

True to his word, Tom appeared with the book the next afternoon and the drilling began —such drilling! sticks represented firearms, and the officer and private set all military etiquette at defiance.

Lent was almost over, and Easter near at hand. The beautiful park about the Priory was putting on its spring dress of verdant green, everything in nature was waking up from the long winter sleep—and the early out-door flowers were poking their heads above the short grass. The children at the Priory were learning their Easter carols, and their young voices rang blithely through the old house.

A tablet which hung on the walls of the little old church near by stated that "Margaret Devereux Chaloner, wife of Julian Chaloner, esquire," had "'fallen asleep in Christ' June 18—." That was when baby Margie was but three weeks old, and now she was six years, and in that time sister Hilary and great-aunt Helen had done their best to supply the mother's vacant place, but Hilary was very young and aunt Helen very old, and Mr. Chaloner's occupation

of barrister kept him often away from home. And so it came that Muriel and Cuthbert were more self-willed than they should have been and read more story books than their lessons, and that Margie was a spoiled darling.

It had been the mother's rule to gather the children about the organ in the early evening hour and to teach them their Easter carols, so Hilary did it in these pleasant spring evenings.

They made a pretty group to aunt Helen's loving eyes as she sat in the low window seat—Hilary at the organ, dear little Margie close beside her, and on the other side Muriel and Cuthbert with arms about each other—all joining heartily in the beautiful Easter hymn.

Colonel Erskine sometimes sat with them at this hour, and he enjoyed the little glimpse of home life it gave him.

One afternoon a week or two after the boys had begun to drill, the colonel ran across them on his way to the house, and Cuthbert, with some blushes, explained what they were doing.

"All right, lads," said the old soldier. "I hope you'll both live to grow up and enter the army.

I have no doubt but that you'll serve her majesty right loyally—but in the meantime don't forget that you are soldiers already and under the grandest Captain that anyone could serve."

Tom looked mystified, but after a moment's hesitation Cuthbert asked, shyly, "You mean in baptism, don't you?"

"Yes," answered the colonel, "and if you admire Jock's behavior, how much more must the brave and beautiful example of Jesus Christ attract you. It was the example of his Saviour that gave Jock strength to be brave, and if you want to be the right kind of soldier you must drill yourselves now in truthfulness and honor and pure-heartedness. Without these qualities you will never be good soldiers either to your God or your queen. I'm an old man, boys, and I've seen more active service than may fall to either of you. I've borne the heat and burden of the day and I've won some distinction, and—remember my words—all the good there is in me, and all I've ever been able to do in my life, have been through the grace of my Master, Jesus Christ." The old soldier bared his head rever-

ently. "You know your motto, Cuthbert—'In the sign of the Cross thou shalt conquer'—and that means that you can conquer the sin and evil, within and without you, only by remembering all that Christ endured for you on that cross, and by obeying His commands. He is our Superior Officer, you know. Thanks for your attention, lads." And with a military salute which was so unexpected that the boys were unable to respond in time, he walked rapidly away.

Cuthbert and Tom looked at each other. "What he says is straight eno'," said Tom, presently, in an unusually subdued tone. "S'pose we try it, master Bertie. It'll no hurt us. It'll sort o' 'elp us for the sodgerin'."

"Maybe it will," answered Cuthbert—then, his eyes lighting up with a sudden thought, he added quickly, "We'll try to to be good and holy, and never tell a lie nor do a wicked thing—like the Knights of the Holy Grail."

"I dunno nothin' 'bout no 'oly Grail," said Tom, who could not always follow the flights of Cuthbert's imagination; "but I can try to keep from tellin' lies."

"That'll be right, that's what I mean," remarked Cuthbert, a little impatiently. "And we never answered the colonel's salute, Tom! See how well I can do it." Straightening up, with both arms flattened to his side, he brought his right hand to his forehead with a stiff, galvanic jerk, in exact imitation of Tom's "sister's husband's cousin's son's" style, as taught by Tom himself.

The boys did try to do better for the next ten days, Cuthbert in the big house, and Tom at home and in the stable-yard, with more comfortable results than usual to those who came in contact with them. Muriel was in the secret and she understood why Cuthbert kept his big dog Hector out of the drawing-room without getting angry when aunt Helen objected to having him there, and why his lessons were so much more perfect than they used to be, and, unconsciously at first, she began to be influenced by his example. She knew, too, why Tom made no more spring traps to catch the rabbits that did not belong to him, and gave his best bull-pup in a "swap," instead

of the second best, as he would have done a week before.

Mr. Chaloner was very much pleased with the report which was given on his next visit home, and he told his son that if he kept as good a record until Easter Day he would give him a pony for his very own.

Cuthbert's delight knew no bounds. After telling Muriel he rushed down to impart the good news to Tom. Dogs and horses were the joy of Tom's existence, and he rejoiced as much at the prospect of another horse to help care for as Cuthbert could desire.

"I've a whole week yet," said Cuthbert, a little dubiously. "I do hope I'll get through it all right—you know a week from to-morrow will be Easter Sunday."

"I'm no afeard but you'll get the 'orse," was Tom's confident assurance. And as the days went on it seemed as if Cuthbert would. He was so gentle and obedient that everybody praised him, and all went well until the Saturday before Easter Day. Hilary and Muriel had gone to the sewing school in the village, and

aunt Helen was in her own room writing letters. Cuthbert felt very happy, he was so sure of getting the horse. Tom and he had walked over to a farm in the neighborhood the afternoon before to look at a pony which they concluded would be just the one for the little boy. It was jet-black, with bright eyes, and a white star in its forehead, and answered to the name of Dandy.

All these particulars suited Cuthbert, and his mind was more on his future property than on the verses he was learning as he sat in his favorite place on the stairs studying his Easter lesson, looking up every now and then to mark the progress of a radiant patch of color as it travelled up a slender marble pedestal which stood in a corner of the hall and rested as if lovingly on the exquisite Daphne it supported. The beautiful piece of statuary had arrived the night before, and was intended as an Easter gift from aunt Helen to papa, who was expected home that afternoon.

Cuthbert laid his hand over a verse and studied it aloud. "Christ our Passover is sacri-

ficed for us, therefore let us keep the feast; not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." He knew the meaning of the words; aunt Helen had explained it very clearly to Muriel and himself, and Colonel Erskine had told them the story of the crucifixion and resurrection so that the children's hearts had thrilled within them. But today thoughts of Dandy kept coming between him and the words, and when he heard Tom's voice through the open door of the housekeeper's room he laid his prayer-book down on the stairs and racing after him invited his friend to come up for a few minutes.

Tom wanted very much to accept, but he hesitated. "I do no think lady 'Ullun' wud loike it," he said."

Cuthbert knew it was forbidden, but he wanted to have his own way and he answered quickly, "Oh, aunt Helen won't mind—come on, Tom. I tell you she won't mind—I am *sure*." So nothing loth Tom came, for the first time, into the fine old hall. They sat on the stairs and

talked about Dandy, then seeing how Tom's eyes roved everywhere Cuthbert showed him the wonders of the place. The beautiful old window with its cross and motto stirred even Tom's slow imagination. Cuthbert made him stand in different positions so as to see it all to the best advantage, and, how it exactly happened he never knew, in stepping back Cuthbert knocked up against the slender marble pedestal and tipped it violently against the wall. The boys hastily set the column straight, but, alas! one of Daphne's uplifted arms lay on the floor in several pieces!

"Oh, Tom!" cried Cuthbert, in a frightened voice. "It is broken! Oh! what *shall* I do! Aunt Helen will be so angry and so will papa. Oh! Tom, I shall lose my pony!" Throwing himself down on the stairs he burst out crying, while Tom looked on in dismay.

"Tell 'er it wor a haxcident!" he said, presently. "It's only a stone figger—she'll forgi' yo'."

"You don't understand," returned Cuthbert, impatiently. "It came from Italy and cost a lot

of money, and it was an Easter present for papa —and if you hadn't come it wouldn't have happened, and now papa will not let me have Dandy —the very last day, too. I *wish* you hadn't come, Tom."

"Yo' axed me—I thought yo' wanted me," said Tom, humbly. "Wudno the squire forgi' yo' if yo' told the truth?"

"He'd forgive me but he wouldn't give me the horse—you know I disobeyed aunt Helen. Oh! Tom, I *can't* tell him."

A shade of disappointment stole over Tom's face, then the distress in the flushed, tearful countenance of his little master touched his heart. He thought of Dandy and of Cuthbert's intense desire to possess him; his ruddy face lost some of its color; he looked at the cross above his head, then he laid his hand on Cuthbert's shoulder.

"Stop yo' tears, master Bertie," he said. "Yo shan't lose Dandy. I'll tak' a' the blame."

At first Cuthbert vehemently refused to even hear of such a thing, but Tom persisted, and when he went away later, Tom's last words were

—"Do no yo' be afeard to say it, sur, I'll never tell, be sure. I can 'ang on, yo' know." And the statue of Daphne was turned to the wall in such a position that the broken arm did not show!

Cuthbert was so unhappy that afternoon that he could settle himself to nothing. He avoided Muriel and would not stir out of the house for fear of meeting Tom. Long years after he remembered that Easter Saturday, and the struggle for evil or good within him. His father's arrival increased his unhappiness, and he acted so strangely that aunt Helen feared he was ill and Muriel did not know what to make of him.

At last the dreaded moment arrived, when aunt Helen led her nephew into the hall to view his Easter gift. One glance was enough to discover the mutilated condition of the beautiful statue. Aunt Helen was astonished and grieved, Mr. Chaloner very angry, and the servants were hastily called together and questioned. Cuthbert hung behind Hilary—a new element had been added to his unhappiness besides the fear of losing Dandy—papa seemed to be so proud

of his good behavior, how *could* he tell him how naughty he had been!

He slipped away into the drawing-room and buried his face in a sofa cushion. And then suddenly there came into his mind the words of one of his Easter verses: "Neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." A sense of deep shame came over the little boy. Ah! a fine Knight of the Holy Grail was he,—a brave soldier—when he was afraid to tell the truth for fear of punishment—but not ashamed to let some one else tell a falsehood to clear him! And he had wanted to be as brave as Jock and as true a follower of the dear Lord as was Colonel Erskine, and here he had denied Him—at Easter, too! "In the sign of the Cross thou shalt conquer," a voice seemed to whisper the words in the boy's ear and give him strength.

Springing up he ran into the hall—not a minute too soon—Tom had been called up from the stable-yard and he stood before Mr. Chaloner, pale, but with an expression of determination on his face worthy of a better cause.

"No use to deny it, Tom," Mr. Chaloner was saying. "The housekeeper says you were in here this afternoon—where you had no business to be—and you only could have done the damage."

Tom opened his mouth to answer, but before his slow tongue could form the words he intended to say a little figure darted to his side.

"I did the mischief, papa, not Tom," said Cuthbert, distinctly, laying his hand on Tom's arm. "Oh! papa, I'm not a good boy at all. I disobeyed aunt Helen—*I* asked Tom to come in the hall. And I was willing to let him tell a lie for me so I could get the prize you offered."

"Oh, master Bertie, do no' yo' say that," broke in Tom, while Muriel came over and stood close to her brother's side.

"I haven't been a brave soldier at all—I've been mean and cowardly," went on the little voice, trying to steady itself. "I know I won't have Dandy; but I don't care, if *only* you'll forgive me." Cuthbert's lips were quivering; the eyes he lifted to his father's face were brimming with tears and most appealing.

The grieved expression on Mr. Chaloner's face was succeeded by a tender one as he drew the little boy into his arms and kissed him in forgiveness.

"Now ask Tom's forgiveness," whispered Hilary, and in an instant Cuthbert's arms were around Tom's neck. "Oh, Tom," he cried, hugging him violently, "I'm not fit to be anyone's officer, we'll just be common soldiers together—and try to help each other to be brave."

Tom blushed until the tears stood in his eyes and blurted out, bluntly, "Yo'll allus be my hofficer—or nobody else. Seems to me yo're more of a hofficer now nor before." Then he rushed out of the hall, covered with confusion.

* * * * * * *

The Easter sun shone soft and warm through the windows of the little church, and as the choir sang "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast; not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," a glad, thankful feeling came

into Cuthbert's heart that he had confessed his naughtiness and been forgiven.

The Easter joy rested upon him, and he smiled up at Muriel, then across at Tom, who sat in the servants' pew. And regardless of the housekeeper's sharp eyes Tom saluted in fine military style.

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